

## Watershed Operations

August 2009

## *Investing in the East Fork Big Creek Watershed, Missouri*

### Introduction

Funding for this watershed project will construct five small flood control structures.



East Fork Big Creek Watershed is located in Harrison County, Missouri and extends into Decatur County, Iowa.

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, this project is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jump-start the economy, and create jobs. NRCS is using Recovery Act dollars to update aging flood control structures, protect and maintain water supplies, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands. NRCS acquires easements and restores floodplains to safeguard lives and property in areas along streams and rivers that have experienced flooding.

### Project Description

- **Location:** Harrison County, 6th Congressional District (Missouri); Decatur County, 3rd Congressional District (Iowa)
- **Federal Funding:** \$850,000

The East Fork Big Creek Watershed Project plan consists of practices to reduce cropland soil erosion and construction of a series of floodwater retarding dams. To date, 72 of the planned 89 structures have been completed or are under construction.

- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- East Fork Big Creek Watershed District
- Decatur County Soil and Water Conservation District (Iowa)
- Decatur County Board of Supervisors (Iowa)
- Harrison County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Harrison County Court

### Benefits

This project will have a major environmental benefits on the watershed problems of soil erosion and flood damage. The entire watershed plan will reduce flood damage, protection for degrading streams, and improve the quality and quantity of wildlife habitat.



Small flood control structures help prevent erosion, as seen here in the East Fork Big Creek Watershed.

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### Economic Opportunities

When completed, this project will provide \$345,000 in average annual benefits. Project funding will provide additional environmental benefits and immediate contracts available for local construction industries and associated businesses within the project's community.

### Statewide Perspective

Completion of this project will assist in maintaining the state's infrastructure of roadways and railways that are imperative to the success of these rural areas. Several major highways cross or intercept the floodplain in numerous locations that link several rural areas. Flood damages in these areas repeatedly impair water quality and threaten the state's fish and animal populations, including some endangered or threatened species. Economic opportunities for residents will be enhanced by the reduction of sediment left by frequent flooding on profitable agricultural lands.

### For More Information

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To date, 72 of 89 flood control structures like the one above have been completed or are under construction in the watershed. ARRA funding will allow the completion of five additional structures.

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